

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 were pending in this application. By way of this reply to the final Office Action mailed June 6, 2003, no claims have been amended, added, or canceled. Therefore, claims 1, 2, 11, 12 and 17-24 remain pending for further consideration on the merits.

It is respectfully requested that this "after final" reply be considered and entered, since it is believed to place the application in condition for allowance.

In the Office Action, claims 1, 2 11 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,052,442 to Cooper et al. in view of JP 405227274A to Inoue; and claims 18-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cooper and Inoue as applied to claim 1, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,304,636 to Goldberg et al. These rejections are traversed for at least the reasons given below.

Independent claim 1 recites that "the digitized voice [of a voice mail sent by a sender] is stored at a particular memory address that is assigned to the sender within the memory, based on the identification of the sender number as performed by the identifier." This feature is not shown in any of the cited art of record.

In particular, the final Office Action relies on Inoue for teachings "an answering machine with a storage means (claimed "memory") for recording both incoming and reply messages." (see page 3 of the final Office Action). While this statement is true, it does not correspond to the claimed "memory" as discussed in the above paragraph. Rather, Inoue's answering machine stores an incoming message and it also stores a reply message, whereby there is no teaching or suggestion that Inoue's reply message is stored in a particular memory address that is assigned to a particular caller. Rather, it appears that Inoue merely discloses that a "default" reply message is sent to all callers, such as "I am not in right now, but if you will leave a message, I will call you back soon", or something like that.

In the present invention, on the contrary, the digitized voice of the voice mail sent by the sender is stored at a particular memory address that is assigned to the sender within the memory, based on the identification of the sender number as performed by the identifier. With such a memory, it is easy to retrieve an e-mail of the sender from a table that provides a correspondence between e-mail addresses and sender numbers. With the e-mail of the sender thus obtained, it is then easy for the recipient of the sender's voice mail to send a reply e-mail to the sender, using the sender's e-mail that is obtained from the table.

Since Inoue does not teach or suggest such a special memory that stores "digitized voice [included in a voice mail sent by a sender] at a particular memory address that is assigned to the sender within the memory, based on an identification of the sender number as performed by the identifier" (emphasis added), and since none of the other cited art of record makes up for this deficiency in Inoue, claim 1, as well as the other independent claims, are patentable over the cited art of record.

Please note that column 4, line 39 of Cooper, which is cited in the final Office Action for showing some features of the claimed memory, merely states that incoming voice messages are "stored in memory 12 under the control of processor 10." There is no teaching or suggestion that these incoming voice messages are stored at a particular memory address that is assigned to a sender within the memory 12.

Accordingly, independent claims 1, 2, 11 and 12 are patentable over the cited art of record.

Claims 17-24 are patentable due to their dependencies on their respective independent claims.

Therefore, since there are no other objections or rejections raised in the Office Action, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is earnestly solicited.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below, if any issues remain to be resolved.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

August 4, 2003

Phillip J. Articola
Phillip J. Articola
Registration No. 38,819

FOLEY & LARDNER
Washington Harbour
3000 K Street, N.W., Suite 500
Washington, D.C. 20007-5109
Telephone: (202) 672-5300
Facsimile: (202) 672-5399